

Leviticus 19 - Thursday, January 14th, 2010

- We begin Chapter 19 with a declaration of God's character: He is Holy, and wants us to be Holy as well, because He Himself is Holy.
- In a way, this is God saying to them then as He is to us now, I want you as my children to be more like I am as your Heavenly Father.
- If you were to assign a topical title to teaching this chapter, it would have to be "Characteristics of a Godly and Holy Life."

19:1 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

- This is where God reiterates the theme of Leviticus; "holiness." Simply put, He wants the children of Israel to "be holy, for He is holy."
- One of the best ways to understand what it means to "be holy," is to see it as being "whole," not half, not a third, but a whole.
- An unholy life is an incomplete, unfulfilled, and unsatisfied life of emptiness because there's a void that makes that life "un-whole."

3 'Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and keep My Sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.

- Here the Lord says that everyone should revere, or respect, their mother and father, and observe the Sabbath's of the Lord their God.
- In effect, He's repeating the fourth and fifth commandments, which is interesting because it implies an inextricable link between them.
- In other words, the degree to which we respect authority will be directly proportionate to the degree to which we reverence God.

One commentator wrote: "Reverencing parents is an act of piety towards God, since the parents are substitutes for the heavenly Father as far as their children are concerned."

Another wrote: "Reverence for one's parents is also linked to reverence for the Lord; it is an acknowledgment that He has rightful authority over us, even as parents do over their young."

Proverbs 30:17 "The eye that mocks a father, that scorns obedience to a mother, will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley, will be eaten by the vultures. NIV

4 'Do not turn to idols, nor make for yourselves molded gods: I am the LORD your God.

- Notice He says not to make molded gods. These gods were molded into whatever one wanted it to be and it was made in their image.
- The Israelites worshipped idols that were made into their own image, desires, and pleasures, as they would worship the god of self.
- Not much has changed really. This is idolatry, and the truth is, it can be found to take up residence in our lives in much the same way.

- Before we move on, there's something else here that I think we would be grossly remiss were we not to spend a little time looking at.
- Throughout this chapter, we here repeatedly; "I am the Lord your God." It's as if God is saying that you can be Holy because I am Holy.
- I suppose you could say it this way; "We can become holy people of God, by the holy Word of God, through the Holy Spirit of God."

"I am the Lord your God. This is the refrain of the entire chapter; count how many times it recurs. Evidently the thought of God should ring out in our lives, as a perpetual chime. ...Thus the perpetual consciousness of God becomes the source of holy and happy living. But how may it become ours? We may make many resolutions, only to break them. We forget after our most definite purposing. There is no help but in the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to teach us all things, and bring all things to our remembrance."

F.B. Meyer Devotionals on Leviticus (http://preceptaustin.org/leviticus_sermon_illustrations_2.htm)

5 'And if you offer a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD, you shall offer it of your own free will. 6 It shall be eaten the same day you offer it, and on the next day. And if any remains until the third day, it shall be burned in the fire. 7 And if it is eaten at all on the third day, it is an abomination. It shall not be accepted. 8 Therefore everyone who eats it shall bear his iniquity, because he has profaned the hallowed offering of the LORD; and that person shall be cut off from his people.

- It's interesting that out of the five offerings, God would single out the peace offering and not include the other offerings as well.
- One thought is that the peace offering was unique in that it is emblematic of both our fellowship with God and with God's people.
- Another thought is that if anyone ate it on the third day it would ruin the typology of Jesus Christ's resurrection fulfilling the offering.

9 'When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. 10 And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather every grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the LORD your God.

- This is a real "welfare" program for the poor, because it would allow them to glean a harvest of whatever was left in the owner's field.
- It wasn't just a hand-out. People could still work for their food, and they could do it in a way that would allow them to keep their dignity.
- In the book of Ruth, we see Boaz leaving grain for the poor. He met and married Ruth from whose lineage the Savior of the world come.

11 'You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another.

- The Lord goes from the rich to the poor as if to say; "the rich should leave some to the poor and the poor should not steal from the rich."

12 And you shall not swear by My name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the LORD.

- The word profane means "to make common." When we say; "oh my God," we are actually profaning His name by making it common.

13 'You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob him. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning. 14 You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I am the LORD.

- Here the Lord is talking about cheating or taking advantage of others especially if they are disabled, because they become easy targets.

15 You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor.

- This is most interesting because it deals with equality. So we're clear, this isn't socialism. It is simply being impartial in our judgments.
- Our tendency is to think that poor people are more spiritual and rich people are more carnal, but nothing could be further from the truth.
- The scriptures are replete with both rich and poor men and women none of whom were known to be more spiritual or more carnal.